

MATT WAGNER

DYNAMITE 3

THE *Shadow*

YEAR ONE



Margo Lane





MATT WAGNER

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THE *Shadow*

YEAR ONE

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3
**WAGNER
TORRES**

THE Shadow

YEAR ONE



SAMUEL '12
MW

MATT WAGNER

DYNAMITE 

THE *Shadow*

YEAR ONE



THE Shadow[®]

YEAR ONE

WRITTEN BY

MATT WAGNER

ART BY

WILFREDO TORRES

COLORS BY

BRENNAN WAGNER

LETTERS BY

SIMON BOWLAND

COVERS BY

MATT WAGNER (A)

ALEX ROSS (B)

CHRIS SAMNEE (C)

HOWARD CHAYKIN (D)

SPECIAL THANKS TO

JERRY BIRENZ, ANTHONY TOLLIN, AND MICHAEL USLAN

THE SHADOW CREATED BY

WALTER B. GIBSON

SEE THE LAST PAGE FOR ALL VARIANT COVERS

DYNAMITE

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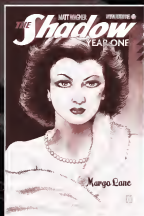


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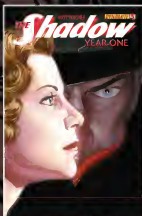
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COVER A
MATT WAGNER



COVER B
ALEX ROSS



COVER C
CHRIS SAMNEE



COVER D
HOWARD CHAYKIN



"VIRGIN ART"
RETAILER INCENTIVE
MATT WAGNER



HAND-DRAWN, ORIGINAL
ART RETAILER INCENTIVE
BRENNAN WAGNER
(SKETCHES WILL VARY)



HAND-DRAWN, ORIGINAL
ART RETAILER INCENTIVE
WILFREDO TORRES
(SKETCHES WILL VARY)



HAND-DRAWN, ORIGINAL
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(SKETCHES WILL VARY)



EXCLUSIVE SUBSCRIPTION
VARIANT COVER
WILFREDO TORRES



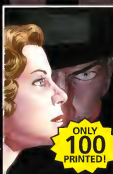
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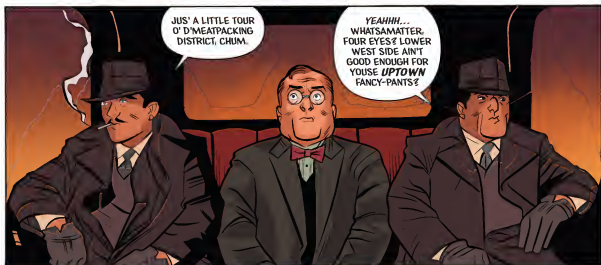
HIGH-END
"BLACK & WHITE ART"
ULTRA-LIMITED COVER
HOWARD CHAYKIN



HIGH-END
"BLACK & WHITE ART"
ULTRA-LIMITED COVER
CHRIS SAMNEE



HIGH-END
"VIRGIN ART"
ULTRA-LIMITED COVER
ALEX ROSS





...I'M SURE
YOU'RE WONDERING WHY
I'VE REQUESTED YOUR
PRESENCE HERE TONIGHT.
THIS AIN'T... *AWT* DUE
TO ANY INFRACTION ON
YOUR PART.

YOUR SERVICES
HAVE COME MOST
HIGHLY RECOMMENDED
BY MY NOBLE, AHH...
UPSTANDING
ACQUAINTANCES.



YOU KNOW
WHO I AM,
FRIEND?



Y-YOU...
YOU'RE CARLO
LUPPING! TH-
THE 'DAN--'
LMA...



IT'S OKAY...
YOU CAN SAY IT--
'THE DANDY DON'.
I SUFFER NO
OFFENSE.

I TAKE PRIDE IN
MY APPEARANCE AND
MY DEAMOUR. IT'S
NOT AN UNWELCOME
SOBRI... SOBRIQU.
UH, NICKNAME!



UNLIKE THAT
POMPINARA,
I GOT A
'BIG GUN'
MASSARETTU!

HE THINKS
HE'S GOT A BIG GUN! I
SAI... *CE L'HAI PICCOLO!*
BASTARDO!



CHRIST!
THE SMELL O'
THIS PLACE...

B-BUT...
W-WHAT HAS
THAT G-GOT
TO DO WITH
ME?!



AS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE
HEARD, MY...AFOREMENTIONED **RIVAL**
HAS LAUNCHED AN UNWARRANTED
WAR BETWEEN OUR RESPECTIVE
BUSINESS VENTURES.

SUCH BATTLES
AIN'T...**AREN'T**
ALWAYS EASY ON
THE REAL ESTATE,
IF YOU CATCH
MY DRIFT.



WHICH IS
WHY **YOU'RE** GOING TO
UNDERWRITE A POLICY THAT
WILL COVER ANY LOSSES I
MIGHT INCUR DURING THIS...
ALTERCATION.



B-BUT...I-I
CAN'T **INSURE** A...A...A
CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE!
MY COMPANY WOULD
NEVER HONOR SUCH AN
ARRANGMENT!

I-IT WOULD
RUIN ME--!





SINCE
FRANKIE THINKS HE'S
SUCH A **TOUGH** GUY,
IT WOULD APPEAR
HE NEEDS...
TENDERIZIN'.

C-CARLO...?
CARLO... I **SWEAR**, I
DIDN'T... DIDN'T HAVE
NO CHOICE!



OH, NO!
M-MY...
GOD!

H-HE SAID HE'D
KILL MY **KIDS!**
MOTHER-OF-
CHRIST, CARLO...
PLEEEASE!



AAAGGHH!



AAEEIGHHH!

CRRK



GAAAEGHHH!

KRKT



NNGGHH!

CHNK



ON YER FEET,
STRONZO!

GNAHH!

SO THEN...

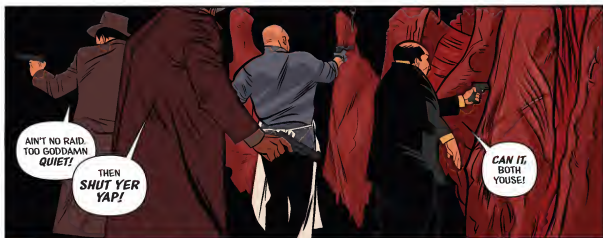
YOU SHOULD
BEAR IN MIND THAT I'VE
KNOWN **FRANKIE** SINCE
WE WAS...**WERE**
TEENAGERS.



I ATTENDED HIS
WEDDING. I STOOD AT HIS
CHILDREN'S CHRISTENINGS.
AND I'VE KNOWN **YOU** FOR...
WHAT? SEVEN...EIGHT
MINUTES?

IN FACT...
WHAT'S
YOUR NAME
AGAIN?









...F-F-**FEAR**
NO **EVIL!**
HUH--**?**!

WHO
KNOWS WHAT
EVIL LURKS IN
THE HEARTS OF
MEN?



THE
SHADOW
KNOWS!

FOR **THOU**
ART WITH ME...



ARE YOU INJURED? DO YOU NEED MEDICAL ATTENTION?

N-N-
NO... I-I'M
OKAY. I--



THEN...
COME
WITH ME.

Y-YOU
SAVED
ME...!



TO **SAVE** A
LIFE... IS NEARLY AS
CRUCIAL AS **TAKING**
ONE. IT CREATES A
BOND THAT STANDS
FIRM AND TRUE!

BUT,
WHO...WHO
ARE YOU?



I AM THE
TETHER TO
WHICH YOUR
LIFE IS NOW
BOUND!

AND I AM
THE **SCOURGE** OF
MEN SUCH AS THOSE
WHO BROUGHT
YOU HERE.

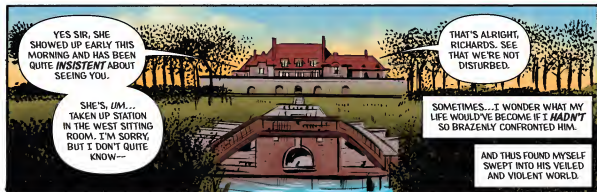
THIS CAR WILL
TAKE YOU SAFELY
HOME. DO **NOT**
SUMMON THE
POLICE!



AND
REMEMBER
OUR BOND...

TH-THANK Y--

HE'S
GONE!



YES SIR, SHE
SHOWED UP EARLY THIS
MORNING AND HAS BEEN
QUITE **INSISTENT** ABOUT
SEEING YOU.

SHE'S, UM...
TAKEN UP STATION
IN THE WEST SITTING
ROOM. I'M SORRY,
BUT I DON'T QUITE
KNOW—

THAT'S ALRIGHT,
RICHARDS. SEE
THAT WE'RE NOT
DISTURBED.

SOMETIMES...I WONDER WHAT MY
LIFE WOULD'VE BECOME IF I **HADN'T**
SO BRAZENLY CONFRONTED HIM.

AND THUS FOUND MYSELF
SWEEPED INTO HIS VEILED
AND VIOLENT WORLD.



IT WOULD SEEM
YOU **MISUNDERSTOOD**
OUR CONVERSATION
THE OTHER EVENING,
MISS LANE.

DESPITE
OUR...**PREVIOUS**
ENCOUNTERS, I
AM NOT SEEKING
COMPANIONSHIP...
FOR DANCING OR
IN ANY **OTHER**
FASHION.

ARE YOU
SPEAKING OF OUR
CONVERSATION **INSIDE**
THE CLUB? OR LATER
ON THE ROOF OF THE
BUILDING...WHEN
YOU **SAVED MY**
LIFE?



IN **ANY** EVENT,
COMMON DECENCY
WOULD'VE SEEN YOU
AT LEAST OFFER
ME A DRINK
BY NOW.



MY
APOLOGIES.

BUT I'M AFRAID
THAT, AGAIN, YOU
ARE MISTAKEN. I
HAVE NO IDEA—

OH, YOU
CAN DENY IT ALL
YOU WANT. AND HIDE
BEHIND THE FACADE
OF YOUR **ASSUMED**
IDENTITY.



BUT, YOU SEE...
I'M QUITE CERTAIN
THAT YOU'RE **NOT**
REALLY LAMONT
CRANSTON!



THE LAMONT
I KNEW ONLY
WIELDED A GUN...
WHEN BACKED BY A
HORDE OF SAFARI
GUIDES AND
PORTERS.

HE WAS
CHARMING AND DROLL,
BUT VALOR... WASN'T
REALLY HIS STRONG
POINT.

YOU'RE ALSO
TALLER THAN
HIM... JUST A BIT.
WHICH BEGS THE
QUESTION—



MARGO LANE,
BORN 1903, THE
DAUGHTER OF HENRY
FIELDING LANE AND
HIS SECOND WIFE,
ADELE PRESCOTT.

I OVERHEARD
YOUR **REVELATION**
THAT NIGHT, MISS
LANE. HOW DID SUCH
A CHILD OF BOSTON
SOCIETY END UP
IN A... **DELICATE**
CONDITION BY THE
LIKES OF GIUSEPPE
MASSARETTI?



"I TRAVELED. AND MADE
THE...**AQUAINTANCE**
OF A SUCCESSION
OF WEALTHY MEN.



"MEN WHO WEREN'T
LOOKING TO **MARRY**
ME BUT WERE **VERY**
WILLING TO SHOW A
GIRL A GOOD TIME.



"THERE ARE **MANY** NAMES
FOR WHAT I BECAME...BUT
FRIEND AND COMPANION ARE
PROBABLY THE NICEST."



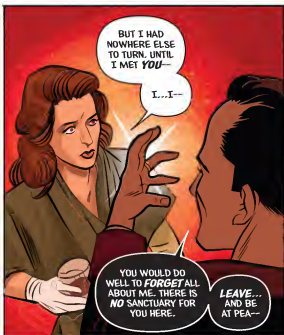
UNFORTUNATELY,
EVEN ABROAD, ONE'S
REPUTATION CAN
BECOME SULLIED.

SO, I RETURNED TO
THE STATES...WHERE THE
ONLY "PATRON" WHOSE
INTEREST I COULD SPARK
WAS A BOOTLEGGING
MOBSTER.



EVENTUALLY...
EVEN **HE** THREW
ME OUT.

NO...I'M **NOT**
REALLY PREGNANT. AND
I'M NOT PROUD OF USING
SUCH A **DESPERATE**
PLAY.





QUESTIONS
THAT ARE
NOT **EASILY**
ANSWERED,
MISS LANE.

REALITIES THAT
ARE NOT **EASILY**
EXPLAINED.



YOU CAME HERE
SEEKING SUCCOR...
AND YET YOU KNOW
NOTHING OF THE DARK
SPRING FROM WHICH
YOU WOULD DRINK.

ITS WATER
IS BRACING BUT
POTENTIALLY...
DEADLY. IT OFFERS
REDEMPTION...
BUT IS, IN FACT,
A **BAPTISM**
OF FIRE!

YOU ARE
CORRECT...I AM
NOT **ALL** THAT
I APPEAR. AND,
YES... IT WAS
I WHO SAVED
YOU.



TO **SAVE** A
LIFE...IS NEARLY
AS CRUCIAL AS
TAKING ONE.

W-WHAT
ARE YOU
SAYING...?!

IF YOU ARE
TRULY PREPARED
TO LEAVE YOUR
WAYWARD PAST
BEHIND THEN,
FOR BETTER OR
WORSE...



**I AM THE
TETHER TO WHICH
YOUR LIFE IS NOW
BOUND!**

IF I HADN'T
BECOME, AS HE
LIKED TO CALL IT,
AN AGENT OF
JUSTICE!





YOU
HAVE...ANSWERED...
MY SUMMONSSSS...

Y-Y-YES...
I HAVE...
COME...



BOSS!
W-WHO IS
THAT? WHO'S
TALKIN'?

SH-SHUT
UP NICKY...

YOU HAVE...OBEYED...
MY ADVICE...AND CHAOS NOW
STANDS...UNLEASHED!



BULLETS
FLY...BODIES ARE
TORN ASUNDER...
BLOOD STAINS THE
STREETS!

BUT...THERE
MUST BE...MORE!
ONLY BY...UTTERLY...
DESTROYING YOUR RIVALS...
WILL YOU...SATISFY...
MY CRAVING!



FOLLOW...MY
WILL...AND YOU SHALL...
STAND SUPREME...IN
THE EMERGING...EMPIRE
OF CRIME!

J-JESUS!

HEEEED...MY
WORD...AND PREVAIL!
OBEY...THE PERILOUS
PROGNOSIS...OF...

...DR.
ZORN!



to be continued

A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT THE SHADOW YEAR ONE #3
FROM MATT WAGNER'S SCRIPT TO WILFREDO TORRES' LINE
ART AND BRENNAN WAGNER'S COLORS

PAGE FOUR

1) THE BUSINESSMAN—manages to stammer out a question as the Boss sniffs deeply from the hankie.

BOSS: CHRIST! THE SMELL O' THIS PLACE...

BUSINESSMAN: B-BUT...W-WHAT HAS THAT G-GOT TO DO WITH ME?!

2) THE BOSS—waves casually with one hand as he slides the hankie into his pocket.

BOSS: AS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE HEARD, MY...AFOREMENTIONED RIVAL HAS LAUNCHED AN UNWARRANTED WAR, BETWEEN OUR RESPECTIVE BUSINESS VENTURES.

SUCH BATTLES AIN'T...AREN'T ALWAYS EASY ON THE REAL ESTATE, IF YOU CATCH MY DRIFT.

3) HE POINTS—at the businessman.

BOSS: WHICH IS WHY YOU'RE GOING TO UNDERWRITE A POLICY THAT WILL COVER ANY LOSSES I MIGHT INCUR DURING THIS...ALTERCATION.

4) EYES WIDE—the businessman replies that he can't possibly do as the Boss desires.

BUSINESSMAN: B-BUT...I -I CAN'T INSURE A...A...A CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE! MY COMPANY WOULD NEVER HONOR SUCH AN ARRANGMENT!

I-IT WOULD RUIN ME—!!



A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT THE SHADOW YEAR ONE #3
FROM MATT WAGNER'S SCRIPT TO WILFREDO TORRES' LINE
ART AND BRENNAN WAGNER'S COLORS

PAGE FIVE

1) THE BOSS—holds up one hand, halting the businessman's reply as he gestures to his thugs with the other.

BOSS: IT'S LIKE THIS...

...ANY GENERAL'S SUCCESS RELIES EXCLUSIVELY AND
CONCLUSIVELY ON THE HONOR AND LOYALTY OF HIS TROOPS.

2) ONE THUG—slides a beef carcass to one side as another one
yanks another hanging bundle forward.

BOSS: THIS HAS BEEN TRUE FROM CEASAR TO BONA-
PARTE TO MY OWN...MORE MODEST CAMPAIGNS.

3) THE HANGING BUNDLE—is revealed to be a half-conscious
gangster, bound and dangling by his wrists.

BOSS: THIS IS FRANKIE D'NALDI. HE RUNS MY WEST-
SIDE RACKET'S FROM 39TH ST. ALL THE WAY UP TO 101ST.

OH, PARDON ME...I MEANT HE RAN THEM.

4) THE BOSS—now stands closer to the businessman, directly his
horrified gaze towards the hapless victim.

BOSS: Y'SEE, FRANKIE HERE...HE LET THAT FICA, MAS-
SARETTI, HORN IN ON MY SPEAKS WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A
SINGLE SHOT BEING FIRED.

SUCH INCOMPETENCE AI—...WON'T BE TOLERATED.



A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT THE SHADOW YEAR ONE #3
FROM MATT WAGNER'S SCRIPT TO WILFREDO TORRES' LINE
ART AND BRENNAN WAGNER'S COLORS

PAGE SIX

1) A HUGE BRUISER—steps forward, clad in suspended trousers, a long-sleeve [Largest panel] undershirt rolled up to his meaty forearms and wearing a butcher's apron; in his gloved hands, he carries a SLEDGEHAMMER. THE VICTIM rouses a bit as he sees the guy with the hammer, weakly struggling against his bounds.

BOSS: SINCE FRANKIE THINKS HE'S SUCH A TOUGH GUY, IT WOULD APPEAR HE NEEDS...TENDERIZED.

VICTIM: C-CARLO..? CARLO...I SWEAR, I DIDN'T...DIDN'T HAVE NO CHOICE!

2) THE BUSINESSMAN—cowers against the wall, one hand held to his mouth in horror, as the bruiser raises the sledge-hammer, rearing it back for a mighty swing.

BUSINESSMAN: OH, NO! M-MY...GOD!

VICTIM: H-HE SAID HE'D KILL MY KIDS! MOTHER-OF-CHRIST,
[Off-panel] CARLO...PLEEEASE!

3) CLOSE-UP—of the victim's face, twisted in an agonizing scream as the blow lands, crushing bones like candy.

SFX: **KNCH**

VICTIM: **AAAGGGGHH!**



A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT THE SHADOW YEAR ONE #3
FROM MATT WAGNER'S SCRIPT TO WILFREDO TORRES' LINE
ART AND BRENNAN WAGNER'S COLORS

PAGE SEVEN

1) 2) 3) **THREE PANEL TIER**—of the Businessman on his knees, his hands tightly clamped over his ears in a vain effort to block out the piteous screaming and merciless sound of cracking bones.

[SFX grow louder, screams fade away]

SFX: **CRRK**
KRKT
CHNK

VICTIM: **AAEEIGHHHH!**

[Off-Panel]

GGAAAEHHH!

NNGGGGHHH!

4) A **THUG**—abruptly hauls the Businessman to his feet, yanking one hand free from covering his ear.

THUG: ON YER FEET, STRONZO!

BUSINESSMAN: **GNAAH!**

BOSS: SO THEN...

YOU SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT I'VE KNOWN FRANKIE
SINCE WE WAS...WERE TEENAGERS.

5) **THE BOSS**—again pulls out his handkerchief as he addresses the businessman (not really looking at him); **IN THE FOREGROUND**, jutting in from off-panel, we can see the bruiser's fist holding the sledgehammer, its head now dripping with blood.

BOSS: I ATTENDED HIS WEDDING. I STOOD AT HIS CHILDREN'S CHRISTENINGS. AND I'VE KNOWN YOU FOR...WHAT? SEVEN...EIGHT MINUTES?

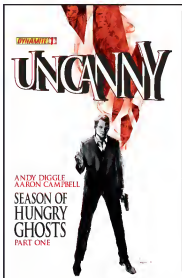
IN FACT...WHAT'S YOUR NAME AGAIN?



DYNAMITE[®]

IN THE NEWS - MAY 2013

ANDY DIGGLE'S UPCOMING UNCANNY SERIES FROM DYNAMITE BLENDS PARANORMAL ABILITIES WITH FAST-PACED CRIME THRILLS



Dynamite proudly confirms that fan-favorite writer Andy Diggle (*Daredevil*) will helm the new series *Uncanny*, set to launch in June as the second title in its burgeoning Crime Line. Illustrated by the immensely talented Aaron Campbell (*The Shadow*), *Uncanny* #1 will ship with two covers by superstar artists Jock (*The Losers*, *Detective Comics*) and Sean Phillips (*Criminal*, *Fatale*), split in equal ratio. A special exclusive variant will be available as well, featuring the artwork of Dan Pososian (*Avengers: Citizen Kang*) and offered only to comic fans who enroll in subscription programs with their preferred comic book retailer.

Uncanny introduces Weaver, a man born with an uncanny ability that allows him to steal other people's skills - their memories, abilities, and expertise - for a limited time. A man with a power like that could change the world, but as a professional gambler, con-man, and thief-for-hire, Weaver prefers to look out for Number One. That is, until he finds himself drawn into a dangerous game of international intrigue where the rules

keep changing, the players are hidden... and the first thing he stands to lose is his life. And maybe, just maybe, he isn't so unique after all...

The anticipation for Andy Diggle's new *Uncanny* series has been building since New York Comic-Con 2012, when it was announced that the red-hot writer would be helming an upcoming, yet unspecified series as part of Dynamite's highly-touted Crime Line. With a huge list of high-profile comics under his belt (including *Daredevil*, *Hellblazer*, and *Thunderbolts*), plus as one of the industry's premiere writers of crime fiction thanks to his acclaimed work on *The Losers*, Diggle will certainly bring a wealth of genre experience and edgy innovation to the new Dynamite launch, a title with the foreboding tag line: "Six billion skill sets. One last chance."

"I'd been talking to Nick Barrucci off and on for years about doing something for Dynamite, and I'm thrilled that we've lined up a project that pushes all of my buttons," says Diggle. "*Uncanny* is an edgy, fast-paced crime thriller with just a hint of the paranormal. In other words, exactly the kind of comics I love to write - and to read. It's very freeing, not having to pull your punches, to be able to present new characters without the reader knowing their entire life history in advance. Instead, the reader gets to discover this new world as Weaver does. They go on that journey with him. And it goes to some pretty dark places."

"Andy Diggle is one of the most incredible writers in comics today. As a fan, I find each series that he writes more engaging than the previous one," says Nick Barrucci, Dynamite's President/CEO. "I enjoyed his *Hellblazer* run, but when I read his *Green Arrow: Year One* and *The Losers*, I wanted to read more of Andy's work and sought out his earlier comic series to read. And I'm glad I did! Having now read much of his body of work, I have a deep respect for his skill as a writer. After several years of exclusivity with DC and Marvel, I'm excited that Andy will be working with Dynamite on a series and genre that he loves. *Uncanny* is going to blow everyone's minds."

Uncanny #1 will be available for comic retailers to order through the April Previews catalog, corresponding to June-shipping products.

"Like" Dynamite's Facebook page today!
www.facebook.com/dynamitecomics

NEXT ISSUE:



ISSUE #4

After confronting the mysterious man who is apparently posing as Lamont Cranston, Margo Lane finds herself drawn into a world of violent intrigue as an agent of *The Shadow*! Carnage escalates in the mob war begun by Big Gun Massaretti but secretly orchestrated by the grotesque figure known only as Dr. Zorn! Meanwhile, *The Shadow* begins to recruit what will become his famous network of operatives. Eisner Award winning writer, Matt Wagner continues this pulp masterpiece that for the first time reveals the fledgling adventures of one of pop culture's greatest iconic heroes! Joined by artist Wilfredo Torres and Wagner's own son on color detail, this hit series excitingly explores what evil lurks in the hearts of men!

DYNAMITE

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WWW.DYNAMITE.COM/BOARDS

FEATURED REVIEWS

MISS FURY #1

(UNLEASH THE FANBOY):

"The gist of Miss Fury's birth is never drink anything in Africa. Or do, and become an awesome Cat Lady Sex Goddess with a small kink fetish. The art... is phenomenal. I heartily look forward to the second issue and give this one a five out of five. I have no complaints and I feel like it has started with a great platform to launch from."

MISS FURY #1

(BOG.COM):

"Writer Rob Williams immerses the reader in the middle of Miss Fury's first predicament in issue #1, before providing some needed origin backstory. (He) keeps true to the character of the 1940s with updates for 2013 audiences and provides enough to keep readers coming back for more next month."

MISS FURY #1

(THE GEEKALITY):

"This is a very cool story filled with sex, violence and time travel right out of the gate by Robert Williams. Herbert's art is very sleek with several sexy images of our main character Marla Drake. ...I am excited to see where this book goes"

MARK WAID'S GREEN HORNET #1

(GEEK OF OZ):

"The *Green Hornet* #1 is just another reason why Mark Waid is the writer to follow. As he did for characters like *The Hulk*, *Daredevil*, and *Superman*, Waid made me fall in love with the *Green Hornet*: a character I previously didn't give a toss about. It's well-paced, punchy, and well worth your four bucks."

MARK WAID'S GREEN HORNET #1

(BROKEN FRONTIER):

"With strong art from Indro and industry icon Waid elevating his game as befits a character of such pedigree, Dynamite's new ongoing will without a doubt position The Green Hornet at the forefront of cutting edge superhero fare."

BIONIC MAN ANNUAL #1

(COMIC BOOK THERAPY):

"Beatty writes a fast-paced and action-packed story. Annuals are usually high octane events that give you a one-shot story while setting things up for the future. Beatty does that well."

BIONIC MAN ANNUAL #1

(UNLEASH THE FANBOY):

"Fluid and fast-paced!"

DYNAMITE® IN STORES NOW! THE BLACK BAT #1

BRIAN BUCCELLATO TALKS REVAMPING PULP HERO BLACK BAT ORIGINALLY POSTED ON COSMICBOOKNEWS.COM



Dynamite will soon be unleashing a comic book built around the pulp hero Black Bat, a character which must have been an influence for everyone from Bob Kane to Stan Lee.

Cosmic Book News Managing Editor Byron Brewer exclusively sat down with *Flash* co-writer Brian Buccellato to discuss his revision and revamping of this classic hero for a modern comic-buying public.

Cosmic Book News: Brian, why are pulp heroes such a rich area to mine for many writers? How do you see this pulp hero, Black Bat?

Brian Buccellato: I can't pretend to be an expert on why pulp heroes are so often revived and used as inspiration. But I guess it might be the allure of the gritty, heroic, sometimes dark, sometimes unexplainable worlds that they painted. I also think pulp stories are entrenched with the kind of proactive and flawed characters that many are naturally drawn to. I would say that my take on the Black Bat is both of those things ... he is a flawed protagonist who is actively trying to right his past wrongs.

CBN: Tell us a little about how you look to "modernize" Black Bat, if you will. And tell us about the man behind the mask? Who is he?

Brian Buccellato: My modernization of the Black Bat and his alter ego, Tony Quinn, is built around his motivations for what he is doing. The original version was pretty straight forward -- do-gooder DA is blinded by his nemesis, then becomes a gun-toting hero who operates outside the law to bring criminals to justice. Writing stories from that perspective didn't interest me, so I had to look for an angle that was something I would want to explore. So I changed Tony to a morally bankrupt defense attorney for the mob, who gets in too deep with his murderous clients as is almost killed. When he is given a second chance on life, he decides to set right all of his previous wrongs. But the challenge for Tony is knowing where to

draw the line between justice and revenge.

CBN: I understand you did some of the visuals and redesigns yourself. Tell us about that process? Will you be doing any art on the book.

Brian Buccellato: Yeah, the final design is mine ... but it was only after numerous iterations by some really good artists that we all decided to go with one of my designs. I won't be doing any of the art ... except maybe coloring some covers.

CBN: Black Bat, I am sure, influenced Bob Kane and perhaps many others on their handling of Batman. Tell us about how you see both characters, their similarities and differences.

Brian Buccellato: Batman is a classic superhero that operates outside the law to bring bad guys to justice. He has a definite line that he won't cross and is VERY clear in his path. The Black Bat, however, is not sure where those lines are and isn't even against shooting to kill as a means of setting things right. Tony Quinn has a debt that he owes to the world and despite his own moral failings, he is making an effort to pay that debt. Batman does what he does because he doesn't want anyone to go through what he did as a young boy. Sure, they both have capes and masks and use bat imagery ... but that's where the similarities end.

CBN: Who is Black Bat's main big-bad? Explain his/her motivation and is there a personal connection like Superman/Luthor or Reed Richards/Doom?

Brian Buccellato: Oliver Snate is the crime boss that literally CUT OUT Tony's Quinn's eyes with a pocket knife. He runs the city and is as ruthless a kingpin as you could find. All criminal roads lead to Snate, and that is where the Black Bat is headed. It is absolutely personal for Tony.

CBN: There is a little Daredevil feel here as well. Do you feel there are similarities?

Brian Buccellato: It's pretty obvious that the Black Bat was a direct inspiration to Stan the Man, both characters go blind and are lawyers by trade. But those elements are integral to the Black Bat's origin, so I have elected to keep them. I'm sure some people are going to accuse me of ripping of Daredevil, but there's not much I can do about that.

CBN: There seem to be many street level heroes today in comics, many vigilantes. What makes Black Bat rise above the pack?

Brian Buccellato: There are no new stories in any genre, really. So it's about the specific ways of dealing with the character and his arc/journey. It's HOW you choose to tell the story and what things you focus on thematically that can make or break it. I think I found a unique take that differs from the more established street level heroes and I hope it will resonate with readers. As far as rising ABOVE the pack ... that's not my concern. I write to the best of my ability and let the chips fall where they may.

Cosmic Book News would like to thank Brian Buccellato for his time and wish him luck on this new book, set to debut sometime this year. Thanks also to Nick Barrucci, Dynamite publisher and CEO, who helped make this interview possible.



THE BLACK BAT #1

Written by
Brian Buccellato

Art by
Ronan Cliquet

Colors by
Mat Lopes

Letters by
Rob Steen

Covers by
J. Scott Campbell
Joe Benitez
Ardian Syaf
Billy Tan

Subscription cover by
Marcos Martin

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AN INTERVIEW WITH NEW, ONGOING SERIES WRITER GAIL SIMONE

What was the deciding factor when you signed on to the new RED SONJA project? What most appealed to you about the character, and what did you hope to bring to the series?

Gail Simone: I've talked about this a lot, I love sword and sorcery stuff. I adore all fantasy, really, but there's something wonderfully intoxicating about half-naked, tanned swordmasters fighting loathsome demonspawn under a blazing sun. I am always trying to get that clang of blades in my comics—I put it in whether it fits or not, in books like *Secret Six*, *Wonder Woman*, and even *The Atom*.

So, in the genre I love, one name stands above all other female warriors, and that's Red Sonja.

I didn't take the book so much as pounce on it, growling.

I love Sonja.

I have to say, Dynamite has been extraordinary. Publisher Nick Barrucci wanted me on this book and has been behind me every step of the way with encouragement and enthusiasm, and he's backed it up in all the ways that matter to me...top artists, great presentation, and a real concern for quality. That's why I'm in this industry. I want to tell stories. And when a book has the publisher pulling out all the stops, the excitement is contagious.

So I am very, very happy.

You've gone on record saying that the new RED SONJA will have its share of humor. That's a tone rarely seen previously in the adventures of our grim heroine. What are your thoughts on bringing mirth to her epic tales?

GS: I don't want Sonja to be doing pratfalls and telling knock-knock jokes (but if she did, they'd be really filthy). But looking back over some of her earlier tales, she was a bit less distant and a bit more rowdy, and I do think that's a really entertaining aspect of her character. My Sonja drinks and carouses and frequents low establishments with compatriots of questionable character.

The first scene we see her in, she's passed out drunk.

She's not Deadpool, but I don't see her as an ice queen, either. I told the artist, the wonderful Walter Geovani, that Sonja isn't cold-blooded, she's hot-blooded!

What can you tell us about the new sidekick characters you'll be introducing into the RED SONJA mythos?

GS: Well, in keeping with the entertainment value of the book, Sonja gets herself two quite unwelcome sidekicks, the tomboy twins Ayla and Nias, who are sixteen years old and IMMEDIATELY get on her nerves. Sonja is many things...a general, a conqueror, a queen. She is NOT a babysitter.

The new RED SONJA is something of a celebration of women, as one of the industry's premiere female creators takes on one of its most iconic heroines. Also, a number of female artists are being tapped to contribute their bold interpretations of Red Sonja for the covers. How do you see this idea of gender affecting the storytelling or presentation?

GS: It spiraled completely out of control in this beautiful way. It's embarrassing, but I really thought, once again, that I was the freak, I was the outsider, the only female

who loved Red Sonja outright. So I had this idea to ask the top female artists in the industry to do the covers and Dynamite ran with it beyond my dreams...but I thought it would take some convincing.

Not only did all the artists we asked immediately agree, they all confessed their secret love for Sonja. They adore her! Lots of the artists submitted multiple sketches because they couldn't stop, and many top names submitted sketches without even being asked, they love Sonja so much, and are dying to see this project. I got a series of sketches from a hero of mine, an Eisner winner, out of the blue and they were so beautiful we couldn't choose what to pick.

We asked for the top female comic artists from several disciplines including cartooning, animation and manga. People are going to freak out at these covers, it became more than a fun idea, it became a bit of a statement, as well.

I also have to say, these are some of the sexiest comics covers I've ever seen, period.

RED SONJA's two main nemeses in the series thus far have been the sorcerers Kulan Gath and Thulsa Doom. Will you be bringing these villains back, or are you going to introduce new baddies into the mix?

GS: I have a lot of love for Thulsa Doom, that isn't out of the question. But we are also hoping to see a lot of new readers, so I want to introduce past elements very carefully. We also want to showcase new things. I am immersing myself in Robert E. Howard works right now, not just his barbarian stuff, and we will bring that mood in more and more. But I want a clean place setting for new readers. I've been doing a ton of cons, and this book is bringing in people who have never read a Sonja book. I want them to have as much fun as the hardcore fan.

So we are creating new villains, including the death-on-wheels DARK ANNYSIA, who hates Sonja for reasons they could never have done in the old Marvel series.

The universe of RED SONJA extends back decades to the original Robert E. Howard CONAN stories. What are your thoughts on contributing to such a long-standing mythos? Is there a particular era / storyline / creator that you look back on as the inspiration for what you'll be doing on the series?

GS: Well, that's an interesting question...but I write these characters with astounding histories all the time, I love doing that. Conan predates Superman by only a handful of years. It's kind of my dream as a writer, to create things that other writers will be inspired by long after I am gone.

It's also true that despite the bad rep that sword and sorcery has for gender issues, Robert E. Howard really created a bunch of astonishingly powerful and interesting female adventures. I love it, I feel very much at home.

The biggest inspiration is the world that Howard created, the mood and tone. Cimmeria and its surrounding countries, they have that wonderful power of fictional geography to FEEL real, like somewhere that exists. They have that Gotham City/Oz/Middle Earth thing, that they don't exist...but they damn well should.

And it's always fun to visit any country where there are monsters and loincloths, I always say.



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